

IV. Remarks

Claims 1-15, 17-28 are pending in the application. The application has been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. The amended claims 1-15, 17, 19-22, 24-27 and original claims 18, 23 and 28, ultimately dependent on claim 1 are considered to define allowable subject matter; hence, applicant submits that the present amendment is properly entered under 37 CFR § 1.116. With regard to the various bases of the **DETAILED ACTION**, applicant responds:

Section 112

The Examiner's suggestion regarding claim 9 is incorporated.

While claim 30 is cancelled, independent claim 1 is amended to clarify that the interconnection of the network is through portal in the network associated with the customer's bank. As the Specification describes at page 3:

The system generates user trust and confidence in e-commerce and network transactions by associating the system entry and administration with a bank, financial institution, or other custodian of account funds, having a pre-existing reputation for reliability, integrity and security. The system thereby promotes greater use of electronic networks for financial and transactional commerce on the Internet and the World Wide Web.

Section 102

The Examiner's comments concerning the Shavit reference are appreciated insofar as the comments imply that both the former set of claims and Shavit relate to a "centric" system. As the applicant pointed out by reference to the illustrations in the response to the September 11, 2002 communication, however, the centrality of the system of the invention sought to be patented centers around a bank or financial institution, a pre-existing trusted party that provides a portal for customer entry into the network transaction and administration system. Shavit essentially describes an aggregator or broker arrangement of disparate services and products in a spoke and hub relationship.

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Certificate of Filing

I hereby certify that this **RESPONSE TO THE FINAL ACTION MAILED ON JUNE 4, 2003 PURSUANT TO 37 CFR § 1.116** accompanied by a petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) [Form PTO/SB/22]; a petition to revive under 37 CFR 1.137(b) [Form PTO/SB/64]; a Conditional Request for Continued Examination [Form PTO/SB/30]; and Transmittal Letter [Form PTO/SB/21] are being filed by facsimile to 703/308-6916 [c/o Mail Stop Petition, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450] on March 22, 2004.


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In the application:

Inventors:	William M. Randle <i>et al.</i>
Serial Number:	09/578,329
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For:	SECURE E-COMMERCE SYSTEM WITH GUARANTEED FUNDS AND NET SETTLEMENT
Group Art Unit:	3624
Examiner:	Sandra S. Snapp
Atty. Docket No.:	0258100-126392

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The invention as presently claimed is distinguished over Shavit in that individual banks are central to their customers and merchants and the banks in turn are centric to a settlement and funds transfer mechanism. In Shavit, "banks" are peers at the same rim with other network participants joined by a network hub. In the invention, as now claimed, the banks in turn are central with each other, thus providing multiple sequences of "centric" interrelationships that allow transactions to be made by a customer through a trusted portal associated with a bank at which the customer has an account. Merchant and customer accounts are adjusted, real time and guaranteed funds transfers and bank to bank settlements are made within existing accounts and systems in the sequenced interrelationships that are defined in the system of claim 1. In this regard, Shavit does not describe, *inter alia*, a trusted customer entry portal through a bank; nor does Shavit manipulate debits, credits, funds transfers, and bank to bank settlement in the sequenced relationships set out in claim 1.

Thus distinguished over the cited reference, applicant submits that pending claims 1-15 and 17-28 define patentable subject matter, that this amendment cancels claims and puts the case in condition for allowance; and that under 37 CFR 1.116 this amendment is proper.

Entry of the amendment and allowance of the application is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any questions or suggestions in view of the foregoing, applicant's undersigned attorney.

Should the Examiner determine that the amendment should not be entered, applicant has alternatively filed herewith a Conditional Request for Continued Examination to allow further proceedings in the application.

Respectfully submitted,



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